

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS
PRESS RELEASE 807
RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION BILL
CHURCHES SHOULD BE CAREFUL WHAT THEY WISH FOR**

**DOGS ARE IN BROAD AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING PRESS
RELEASE FROM THE RATIONALIST ASSN OF NSW:**

Although the Founding fathers, placed Section 116 in the Constitution, this strong freedom of religion clause was read down and out by the Barwick High Court in the DOGS case of 1981.

The Churches wished to keep their billions of dollars of State Aid rather than their religious freedom. They argued for 26 days in a trial of facts, that they were no more religious than State Schools. Then they argued that the words 'any religion' meant 'a particular religion. The High Court, with the notable exception of Justice Lionel Murphy, agreed. So, they lost any semblance of integrity, and a shield became a sword.

The Churches in Australia do not wish to re-visit Section 116 since a proper interpretation of this potential Bill of Rights clause would affect the extraordinary largesse they receive from the taxpayer.

By reducing freedom of conscience to a mere piece of discrimination legislation they are setting up for future of sectarian squabbling as differing religions vie for 'the right to discriminate' against both each other and non-believers.

Christian churches in particular have forgotten Christ's injunction to 'Give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and to God that which is God's.'

**RATIONALIST ASSN OF NSW
Established 1912
MEDIA RELEASE 31 AUGUST 2019**

**RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION BILL GOES TO CONFIRM
AUSTRALIA IS A SOFT THEOCRACY**

Religion is integrated into Australia governments at three levels: legally, financially and symbolically. This makes the constitutional monarchy that is Australia effectively a soft theocracy in these ways: **Legally:** no High Court interpretation of s.116 of the constitution has formally separated government

and religion; there are no clauses in state constitutions separating government and religion **Financially:** all religions with a supernatural belief are tax-exempt charities: their passive investments and active commercial enterprises are all tax-exempt, effectively subsidized by all taxpayers **Symbolically:** a religious figure, the Queen of Australia, is head of state; a religious mass is undertaken with the prime minister and leader of the opposition reading a lesson before the start of a new parliament; judges annually attend a Red Mass where they seek religious guidance for their legal decisions in the year ahead; prayers are said before parliament commences.

The Attorney-General's draft religious discrimination bill, again, symbolically introduced in a synagogue, enhances the entanglement of government and religion detailed very briefly, above. If it is introduced into law, the bill will help to confirm that Australia is a soft theocracy where secular discrimination law can be used to privilege religious belief particularly where it concerns issues the churches define as 'sinful': gay marriage, abortion, assisted dying, sexuality outside the perceived norm of heterosexuality.

By additionally setting up a Religious Freedom Commissioner while at the same time defining a religious belief, bizarrely, as 'holding a religious belief' or 'not holding a religious belief', the Attorney-General is presenting a bill that is incredible. Only in a soft theocracy such as Australia could a bill like this be introduced, in a synagogue, and seriously contemplated. The parliament of Australia should reject this bill.

Max Wallace

Secretary M: 0418 939 539

nswrationalists@gmail.com www.nswrationalists.com

PO Box R684 Royal Exchange NSW 1225

LISTEN TO THE DOGS PROGRAM

855 ON THE AM DIAL: 12.00 NOON SATURDAYS

<http://www.3cr.org.au/dogs>